

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In an exhaust path, a HC trapping material which traps HC contained in exhaust gas temporarily, a H₂O trap which traps H₂O contained in exhaust gas and a CO oxidation catalyst are arranged in this order from the upstream side, wherein the H₂O trap is disposed just upstream of and close to the CO oxidation catalyst. H₂O and HC which are components disturbing the activity of the CO oxidation catalyst can be removed efficiently and the adsorption heat and condensation heat of H₂O can be efficiently utilized to raise the temperature of the CO oxidation catalyst so that early activation of the CO oxidation catalyst is accomplished just after an engine starts.